

CLAIM AMENDMENTS

1-20. (canceled)

21. (currently amended) A printing process for obtaining patterns of nanometer and micrometer dimensions on a substrate, comprising the steps of

forming a solution or suspension of a liquid and a printing material,

~~i) the application of a~~ applying a layer of the solution or suspension of a printing material to said substrate,

~~ii) the positioning, without applying pressure, of a stamp provided with relief patterns at a distance of 0 nm to 500 μ m from the substrate~~ with the relief patterns in contact with the layer of the solution or suspension, [[and]]

~~iii) the evaporation of~~ evaporating the liquid from said solution or suspension from between the substrate and the stamp so as to draw the suspension or solution by capillarity to the relief patterns and deposit the material on the substrate in accordance with the relief patterns of the stamp, and

thereafter separating the stamp from the substrate.

22. (currently amended) The process according to claim 21, wherein said material is chosen from the group ~~constituted by~~ consisting of soluble polymers or precursors of polymers.

23. (currently amended) The process according to claim 22, wherein said material is chosen from the group ~~constituted by~~ consisting of polyaniline, polyphenylene vinylene, poly(3-alkyl-thienyl) and mixtures thereof.

24. (currently amended) The process according to claim 21, wherein said material is chosen from the group ~~constituted by~~ consisting of tris-(quinoline) aluminum, coordination compounds, metallic clusters, rotaxanes, polythiophenes, phthalocyanines, and mixtures thereof.

25. (currently amended) The process according to claim 21, wherein said material is chosen from the group ~~constituted by~~ consisting of colloidal substances and nanoparticles.

26. (previously presented) The process according to claim 25, wherein said material is colloidal Au or Ag.

27. (currently amended) The process according to claim 21, wherein said material and/or said solution or suspension is chemically reactive with ~~[[the]]~~ a surface of said substrate and ~~in particular~~ can produce corrosion, chemisorption, grafting or polymerization of the surface.

28. (previously presented) The process according to claim 21, wherein said distance is changed during imprinting.

29. (previously presented) The process according to claim 21, wherein said stamp has multiple protrusions of arbitrary shape and dimensions.

30. (currently amended) The process according to claim 21, wherein said stamp is a hard stamp, preferably made of chromium, steel, silicon oxide, or a polymer like polymethyl metacrylate, or polycarbonate.

31. (previously presented) The process according to claim 21, wherein said stamp is a stamp made of elastomeric material, preferably polydimethyl siloxane.

32. The process according to claim 21, wherein said stamp is constituted formed by a thin film of material that floats on said solution.

33. (previously presented) The process according to claim 21, wherein said evaporation step occurs at a temperature in the interval between -70 and 300 degrees Celsius.

34. (currently amended) The process according to claim 26, wherein said substrate has a surface area that is orders of magnitude larger than the dimensions of the protrusions relief patterns of the stamp.

35. (currently amended) The process according to claim 21, wherein said stamp is arranged in an inclined configuration with respect to ~~[[the]]~~ a surface of said substrate, thus producing on the substrate patterns with a spatially variable thickness.

36. (previously presented) The process according to claim 21, wherein said solution contains multiple printing materials in the form of solutes, said solutes being suitable to precipitate selectively in different times, thus generating controlled nonuniformities of composition in the resulting patterns.

37. (currently amended) The process according to claim 21, wherein said ~~solutions contain~~ solution contains imprinting materials in amounts suitable to react in reaction volumes on the order of magnitude of picoliters.

38 - 40. (canceled)